

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Land Conservancy of New Jersey for its 30 years of dedicated work on behalf of the great state of New Jersey.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. ADAM KINZINGER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 23, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2219) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year September 30, 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Chair, there is no bigger supporter in this body of the Air Force than me. For nearly ten years, I have been privileged to serve my country in the Air Force and Air National Guard as a pilot. During that time I often thought, "If I am willing to fight for my country on the outside, I must be willing to defend and preserve our country for future generations on the inside." Today I rise in support of my amendment to the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, H.R. 2219. My amendment would save the U.S. taxpayers nearly \$100 million by not allowing the Air Force to redevelop the current flight suit.

Since coming to this House, my colleagues and I have been working diligently to determine essential versus non-essential government spending projects. One area I wanted to examine more closely was a \$100 million project to develop a new flight suit for the Air Force, called the "Integrated Aircrew Ensemble." This flight suit is not being developed in response to specific needs of the Air Force's next-generation fighter, the F-35 Lightning II. Rather, it is designed to integrate the already existing protections which are included in our current flight suit.

In February, at the Air Force's 2012 budget hearing, Chief of Staff General Norton Schwartz was asked—at my request—whether the Air Force was developing a new flight suit. General Schwartz stated, "We are not in the business of redesigning our flight suit under the current circumstances." Since his testimony, General Schwartz said this quote is "accurate but incomplete," and does not represent his position on the flight suit contract.

Our office met with management from TIAX LLC, the company awarded the contract. After reviewing the information from TIAX and speaking with many of my fellow pilots who fly different aircrafts, I remain confident that the current flight suit provides more than adequate protection.

Over the past 10 years, the Air National Guard has not had a single G-LOC (induced loss of consciousness due to excessive G-force) Class A mishap, while the Air Force has had 5 G-LOC Class A mishaps. Of those 5 Air Force Class A mishaps, 3 occurred in an F-16 aircraft, while the other two occurred in a T-6 and T-37, respectively. The Air Force was unable to provide details surrounding the T-6 and T-37 Class A mishaps; however, they were able to provide the details sur-

rounding each of the F-16 Class A mishaps. In each of those cases, the pilot flying the F-16 was performing Basic Fighter Maneuvers (BFM) under the supervision of an instructor pilot. It is important to note that all of these accidents took place in a training environment and by young pilots still honing their skills. In none of the executive summary reports surrounding those accidents was the flight suit noted as a contributing factor toward causing G-LOC.

For these reasons, it is my strong belief that updating and integrating the flight suit will not be the panacea that proponents of the program claim in terms of protecting against these types of G-LOC Class A mishaps. Protecting against G-LOC has much more to do with the innate physical abilities of our pilots and the training they receive than any flight suit they will wear.

These findings led me to offer an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) to postpone the flight suit development and save taxpayers nearly \$100 million. This amendment was adopted into the NDAA, which passed the House by a vote of 322-96.

Many of my colleagues in the House support this amendment, including Congressman SAM JOHNSON (R-Texas), a twenty-nine-year Air Force veteran, former POW in Vietnam, former Director of the Fighter Weapons School and pilot with the Thunderbirds. He said, "With men and women in harm's way in three different wars, the Air Force shouldn't even think about using scarce dollars for new flight suits."

My other colleague, Congressman PETE OLSON (R-Texas) said, "As a former Navy Aviator, I know firsthand that our current flight suits provide all of the protection and comfort our aviators need. Our nation is facing record debt and deficits and as such, we must apply careful scrutiny over every new project we are looking to fund. If I thought for one second that our pilots were in danger, I would be the first to support a new flight suit, but the reality is that this is a \$100M solution looking for a problem."

Senator KIRK (R-IL) also stated, "While nothing takes precedence over protecting and arming our troops in the field, we still have a responsibility to protect taxpayers from excessive spending. Given our current fiscal situation, we must make tough decisions to ensure that tax dollars are spent efficiently—even at the Pentagon. Cutting a \$100 million program the Air Force says it does not need is exactly the kind of spending restraint the American people want to see from Congress."

Make no mistake, I am committed to ensuring our military is the strongest and best equipped in the world. However, we must make tough decisions with regard to military needs and military wants. I was sent to Washington to make difficult decisions, even those that require the military to prioritize its spending.

TRIBUTE TO MR. WILLARD
OVERTON

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 13, 2011

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker:

Whereas, the Almighty God has called to his eternal rest, Mr. Willard Overton; and

Whereas, Willard Overton was born on April 9, 1935 to the parentage of Arthur Overton Sr. and Osca C. Presley in Chicago, Illinois and was the 7th of 9 children; and

Whereas, Mr. Overton received his formal education in the Chicago Public Schools and worked for 31 years at AT&T Western Electric Hawthorne Works and retired at the age of 47, as the youngest person ever to retire from this company; and

Whereas, he received many awards and commendations for his outstanding works; and

Whereas, Willard was a very talented, bright, accomplished, witty and intelligent person who was committed to protecting and improving the quality of life; and

Whereas, he was actively involved with Provident St. Mel High School and was a regular and skilled debater on WVON and other radio talk shows: now be it

Resolved, that we pause and pay tribute to Mr. Willard Overton on a very outstanding and productive life.

On a personal note, Bill's niece Levogne and my wife Vera were best friends and worked together in the Business Department at Collins High School; brother Ray made my first political sign and Al had a variety store in front of my office on Cicero Avenue and was a benefactor to many of our community activities; and niece Crystal is a community and political activist who is involved with many of the public things that I do. A great family, I am proud to know them.

FALL RIVER CHAMBER URGES
RESPONSIBLE ACTION

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 13, 2011

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, an organization with which I am proud to work closely on behalf of economic development in the Greater Fall River Area, and for sensible national policies, the Fall River Area Chamber of Commerce, recently published in the Fall River Herald News a very thoughtful article which "respectfully urges Congress to place the nation ahead of party politics by raising the federal debt limit without delay." The Chamber notes that "failure to increase the statutory debt limit in a timely fashion can have a significant and long lasting negative impact on any potential recovery in the towns and cities of the South Coast."

Mr. Speaker, the Chamber understandably and correctly notes that they are "extremely concerned about the level of the federal debt and the unchecked annual budget deficits that have become the new normal in Washington, DC". I also agree with them that "the U.S. government must learn to spend more wisely." And I believe that they have the sequencing of these issues in the correct form when they close by urging those of us in Congress to "raise the federal debt ceiling and set in motion a dialogue to curb unchecked federal spending." I believe it is essential that we raise the debt ceiling and avoid negative economic consequences, and at the same time commit ourselves to adopting a set of policies that will substantially reduce the deficit over